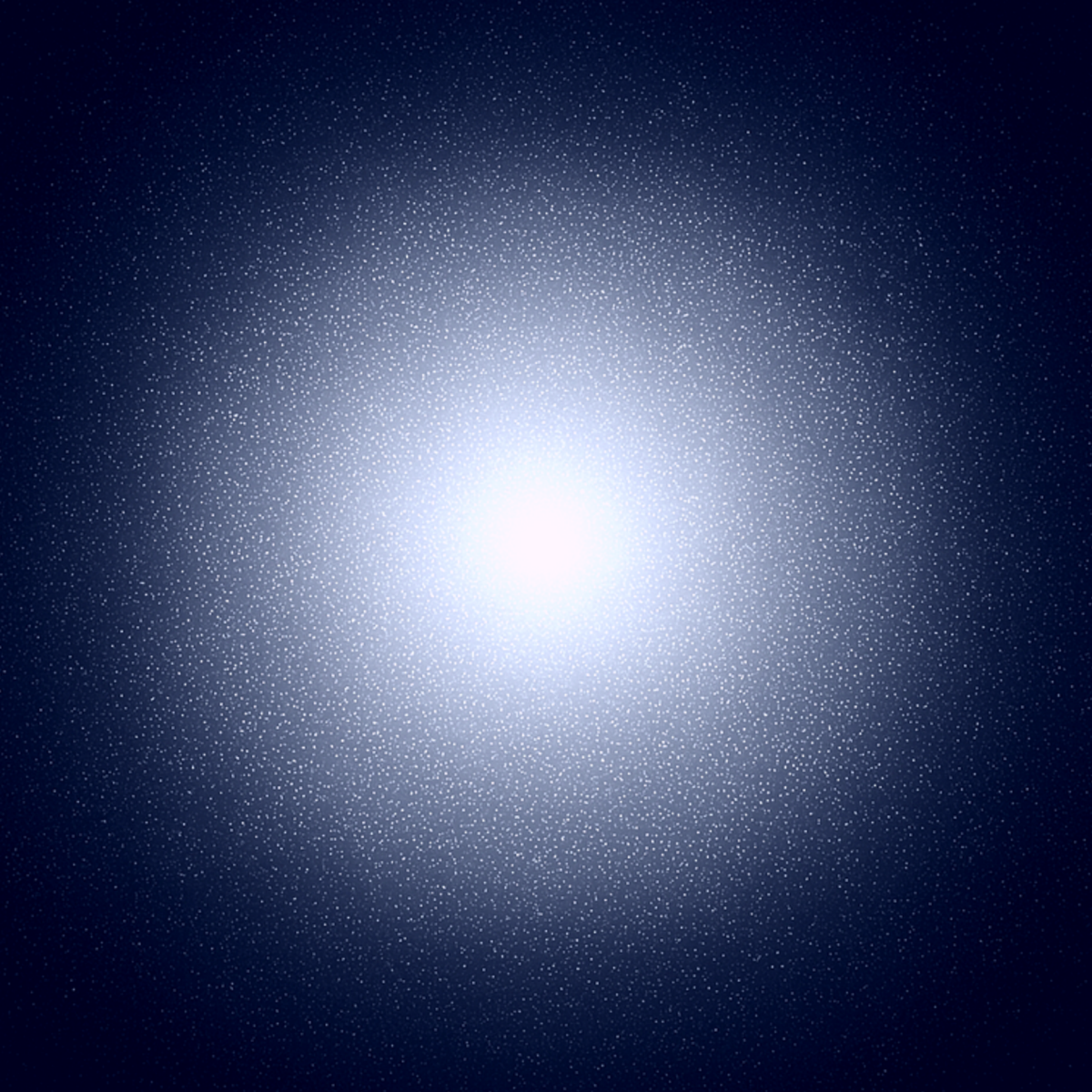


A Note from the Stillness

What follows is a sharing of many years of practice, a journey marked by countless failings, subtle pitfalls, and the persistence of the wandering mind.

Through those trials, a clear path eventually emerged. In these pages, the detours are left behind.

Only the direct path remains, distilled into images and words.

To ground this personal experience in the timeless Dhamma, you will find supporting excerpts from the Pali Canon and the ancient Commentaries.

May this guide serve as a steady light on your own journey.

Rūpajjhāna

Still the lens, or the QR code remains a blur.

"Dīghaṃ vā assasanto 'dīghaṃ assasāmī'ti pajānāti;
dīghaṃ vā passasanto 'dīghaṃ passasāmī'ti pajānāti.
Rassaṃ vā assasanto 'rassaṃ assasāmī'ti pajānāti;
rassaṃ vā passasanto 'rassaṃ passasāmī'ti pajānāti."
—Anāpānasati Sutta (Majjhima Nikāya 118)

Breathing in long, he discerns, 'I am breathing in long'; or
breathing out long, he discerns, 'I am breathing out long'.
Breathing in short, he discerns, 'I am breathing in short'; or
breathing out short, he discerns, 'I am breathing out short'.

The Trap of the Will

At the beginning, simply let the attention rest on the breath as if you are watching a child sleep, tenderly, without interference.
If the breath is long, let it be long; if it is short, let it be short.
Your only task is the "knowing".
Meditation is a harvest of how we live. The stillness of the sit depends entirely on the clarity of your life, your morality, physical health, and the quietness of your lifestyle.
If the ocean of your daily life is turbulent, the pool of your meditation can never be still.

"Sabbakāyapaṭisaṃvedī assasissāmī'ti sikkhati;
sabbakāyapaṭisaṃvedī passasissāmī'ti sikkhati."
—Anāpānasati Sutta (Majjhima Nikāya 118)

He trains himself, 'I will breathe in experiencing the whole body'; he trains himself, 'I will breathe out experiencing the whole body'.

Defining the Body

To ensure the meditator does not wander back to the physical body, the Papañcasūdani and Visuddhimagga clarify that here, "Kāya" refers exclusively to the body of breath.

Awareness must be refined to track the breath through its entire lifecycle without falling away.

Ādi: The Beginning

Majjha: The Middle

Pariyosāna: The End

When these three are unified into one seamless stream of knowing, the breath begins to lose its "coarseness".

"Passambhayaṃ kāyasaṅkhāraṃ assasissāmī'ti sikkhati;
passambhayaṃ kāyasaṅkhāraṃ passasissāmī'ti sikkhati."
—Anāpānasati Sutta (Majjhima Nikāya 118)

He trains himself, "I will breathe in calming the bodily formation"; he trains himself, "I will breathe out calming the bodily formation".

The Transition

As the breath softens and eventually seems to disappear, a void opens. For a long time, I did not know what to do in that silence.

The worst advice I received during this time was to "turn to Vipassana." It was a detour. My Samadhi was still basic; it was not yet "ripe" enough to penetrate the veil and see Nibbāna. Turning to analytical Vipassana too early only agitated the mind and broke the concentration.

When the breath vanishes, you do not move. You stay with the knowing of the stillness. You wait for the breath to reappear as a mental sign, the Nimitta. You do not abandon the path of stillness for the path of analysis until the Samādhi is strong.

"Assāsapassāsesu ca anāgatabhāvam upalakkhayato
aparacireneva nimittaṃ uppajjati."
—Säratthadīpani-tīkā

While the meditator is noticing that the in-breaths and out-breaths have vanished, in no long time, the Nimitta arises.

The Anchor

There is a "no-man's land" gap between the breath vanishing and the Nimitta appearing.
Remaining perfectly still in the "knowing of the void" allows the Nimitta to arise naturally.
At first, it may appear as a faint mist or flickering star. You should simply acknowledge it rather than "grabbing" at it.
Letting the mind and the light become one creates the "ripe" Samādhi required for true penetration of the Dhamma.

"Tūlasadisaṃ vā kappāsasadisaṃ vā vātasadisaṃ vā sūcimukhasadisaṃ vā kīṭamukhasadisañca."
— Visuddhimagga

Before the sign becomes a visual light, it arises as a refined tactile perception at the "contact-place." The breath no longer feels like air, but manifests through these tactile signs.
Tūlasadisaṃ vā kappāsasadisaṃ vā: Like the touch of silk-cotton or a flake of wool.
Vātasadisaṃ: Like a gentle breeze or a cool draft.
Sūcimukhasadisaṃ: Like the sharp, subtle touch of a needle-point.
Kīṭamukhasadisañca: Like the tiny, prickling touch of a small insect.

The Stairway of Pressure

For a long time, I viewed the swirling pressure between my eyebrows as a distraction. It felt like an intrusion on my peace. I would try to push it away. This was my mistake. I did not realize that this tactile sensation, this swirling pressure, was the very stairway to the visual Nimitta. By pushing it away, I was pushing away the Path itself.

Eventually, I learned to simply observe. Do not push the pressure. Do not pull it. Do not try to look "up" at it with your eyes. Just maintain a quiet, non-reactive awareness of that point.

When you stop resisting the tactile sign, it naturally transforms into a luminous, visual glow. The touch becomes the light.

"Meghapaṭalasadisaṃ vā valāhakasadisaṃ vā paṭasadisaṃ vā."
— Visuddhimagga

When the mind begins to "visualize" the refined breath, the Visuddhimagga lists various forms the sign may take.
Meghapaṭalasadisaṃ: Like a film of cloud.
Valāhakasadisaṃ: Like a thundercloud or a bank of mist.
Paṭasadisaṃ: Like a white cloth or a sheet of silk.

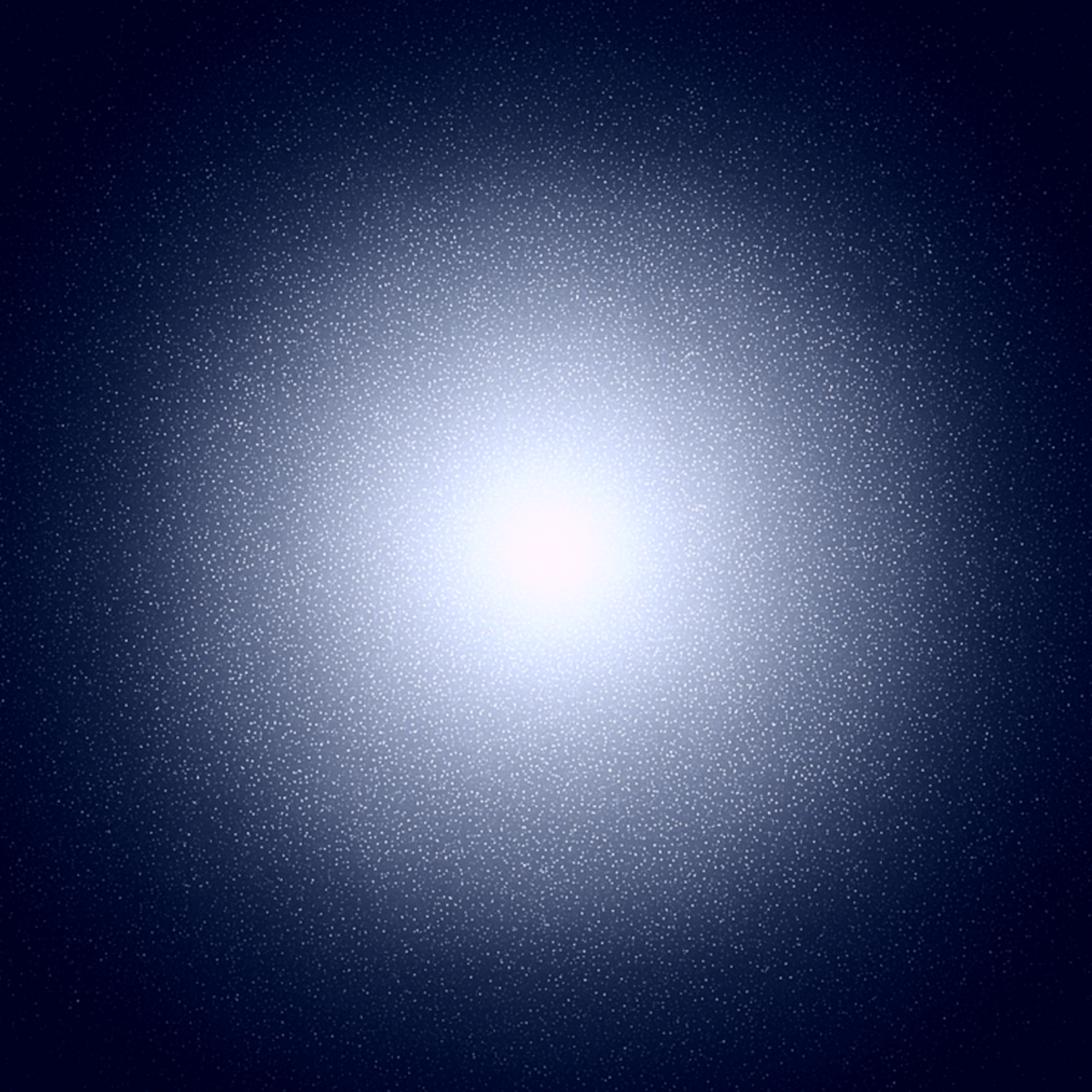
"Yathā hi amajjito ādāso malaggasāviddho nippabho hoti, evamuggahanimittaṃ visadaṃ na hoti. Tato paraṃ pana samajjiyamāno viya ādāso pabhassaraṃ hoti."

— Sāratthadīpanī-ṭīkā

Just as an unpolished mirror, stained with dirt, is without luster, so the learning-sign (uggaha-nimitta) is not clear. But thereafter, like a mirror being polished, it becomes radiant.

"Tārakasadisaṃ vā muttāpahandanasadisaṃ vā ratanajālasadisaṃ vā."
— Sāratthadīpanī-ṭīkā

As the concentration stabilizes, the shimmering cloud condenses into specific, radiant structures. The Sāratthadīpanī-ṭīkā describe these variations in the refined sign.
Tārakasadisaṃ: Like the sharp radiance of a star.
Muttāpahandanasadisaṃ: Like a string of pearls, luminous and bound together.
Ratanajālasadisaṃ: Like a net of jewels, multifaceted and glistening.



"Satiparipākaṃ vā anuyuñjati, samādhiparipākaṃ vā anuyuñjati. Satiparipākaṃ anuyuñjato, samādhiparipākaṃ anuyuñjato: ‘Evaṃ me sati paripaccati, evaṃ me samādhi paripaccati’ti. Taṃ nimittaṃ āsevati bhāveti bahulīkaroti. … Na pana vāyamati, na pana parāmasati."
— Paṭisambhidāmagga

He applies himself to the ripening of mindfulness, he applies himself to the ripening of concentration. As he applies himself thus, he understands: ‘In this way my mindfulness is ripening, in this way my concentration is ripening.’ He attends to that sign, develops it, and pursues it frequently. But he does not [forcefully] strive, nor does he grasp [or mishandle] it.

The Danger of the Will

Forceful looking leads to deep mental fatigue. In the worst cases, it creates internal friction that manifests as anger and "voices in the head."
Do not mistake this for Mara or an external spirit. This is simply the result of wrong practice.

The path naturally evolves only if you let go. If your will gets in the way, the light will turn into a source of agitation rather than cool peace. You cannot force the door to Jhana. You can only remain still enough that the door opens on its own.

"Santimetaṃ jhānaṅgena ekaggatāvasena cittaṃ appeti, ārammaṇe cittaṃ pakkhandati viya."
— Abhidhammatthavibhāvinī-ṭīkā

By the power of one-pointedness (ekaggatā), the mind fixes itself (appeti) into the peaceful Jhana-factor. It is as if the mind plunges into (pakkhandati) the object.

The Absorption

There is a depth beyond simply "watching" the light. If you remain perfectly still, the boundary between you and the Nimitta will suddenly collapse.
You no longer feel existence.. The "Observer" dies, and only the "Knowing" remains. It is a state of profound, silent unity.

It is only after the mind emerges from Jhana, sometimes after several hours of what felt like a few minutes, that the "I" returns. As the mind re-embodies, you see the Nimitta again as an object and regain the sense of existence.
You realize then that the Nimitta was just the doorway to the Jhana. Do not cling to the doorway. Let yourself be swallowed by the light.

Nibbāna

The still lens must observe the nature of the conditioned phenomemna
to experience the unconditioned.

"Khayavayavasena saṅkhāre passato... tadanantaraṃ nibbānaṃ ārammaṇaṃ katvā."
— Visuddhimagga

To one seeing the destruction and fall of formations... immediately following, the mind takes Nibbāna as its object.

"Atthi, bhikkhave, ajātaṃ abhūtaṃ akataṃ asaṅkhataṃ... Yasmā ca kho, bhikkhave, atthi ajātaṃ abhūtaṃ akataṃ asaṅkhataṃ, tasmā saṅkhatassa jātassa bhūtassa katassa nissaraṇaṃ paññāyati."
— Ajāta Sutta (Itivuttaka 43)

There is, monks, an Unborn, Unbecome, Unmade, Unconditioned. If there were not this Unconditioned, there would be no escape from the conditioned, the born, and the made.

The Glimpse

While observing the relentless arising and passing away of the sensation of the breath, the "world" suddenly ceases to be a process and simply explodes.
This is not the quiet mind of basic Vipassana. This is not the mere absence of thoughts.
This is the momentary observation of the Asankhata (The Unconditioned).
For a "billionth of a second", the mechanism of existence stops. The citta "touches" Nibbāna.
Even if it is only for a flash, the world as you knew it is gone forever.
You can never again believe in the permanence of the mirage.

"Sukkha-vipassako hi lokuttara-maggam päpuṇanto upacāra-samādhi-mattam nissäya pāpuṇāti. Uparima pana maggā yathā-yathā visuddhatarā, tathā-tathā balavatarā samādhi-visesā apekkhitabbā."
— Visuddhimagga

The first observation of Nibbāna, the Sotāpatti stage, can occur for the intelligent by relying on merely access-level concentration. However, as the higher paths become increasingly purified, they demand a correspondingly more powerful and specialized stillness.

The Grind

The first observation of Nibbāna in the Gotrabhū, Sotāpatti-magga, Sotāpatti-phala cittas can occur for the incisively intelligent through the sub-jhana level concentration. Subsequent experiences, for example, the Sakadāgāmi stage, require the "Lens" of the mind to be sharper and stiller.
You may need to perfect deep samādhi for years to experience the element of Nibbana again.

"Sotāpattiphalasamāpattito pana sakadāgāmiphalasamāpatti visuddhatarā ca paṇītatarā ca... yathā yathā hi uparimasamāpatti, tathā tathā sā dīghakālaṭṭhāyinī hoti."
— Visuddhimagga

The attainment of the fruition of Once-Returning is clearer and more sublime than the attainment of the fruition of Stream-Entry... and as the higher attainments are reached, the mind stays in it for a long duration.

The Absolute Stillness

While the first breakthrough of Sotāpatti may manifest as a sudden, incisive flash, the subsequent stages such as Sakadāgāmi, the experience is a profound and lingering immersion.
Here, you encounter the real, unmistakable taste of Nibbāna, a state of ultimate stillness and an unshakeable, absolute peace.
Unlike the first breakthrough (Sotäpatti), where the return is like a quick system reboot, the emergence from the higher stages of Nibbana is a gradual and observable process.
The mind does not simply "snap" back. It "re-assembles" itself piece by piece.
The return begins with a subtle mental ripple,.a faint stir in the absolute stillness.
At this stage, there are still no thoughts, no emotions, and no sense of a body.
As the ripples grow more frequent, the mind begins to move again.
Only after this mental movement is established do thoughts begin to form, followed finally by the return of physical body sensations.

"Natthi, bhikkhave, āgati, natthi gati, natthi ṭhiti, natthi cuti, natthi upapatti; appatiṭṭhaṃ appavattaṃ anārammaṇametaṃ. Esevanto dukkhassā"ti.

— Tatiya Nibbāna Sutta (Udana 8.3)

There is, monks, no coming, no going, no staying, no passing away, no arising; it is unestablished, unpropped, without object. This is the end of suffering.

The Experience of Non-Existence

The stillness of Nibbāna is not a peaceful feeling you experience. It is an absolute non-movement so profound that the self cannot survive it.
During the moments of immersion in the "Jet Black" element, there was no observer, no "me" watching the silence, and no consciousness of time.
You do not "know" Nibbāna while you are in it, because the "knower" has been temporarily extinguished.
You can only recall the experience upon emerging.

"Nibbānaṃ gotrabhūssa, vodānassa, maggassa, phalassa
ārammaṇapaccayena paccayo."
— Paṭṭhāna

Nibbāna is the condition for Change-of-lineage (Gotrabhū),
Purification (Vodāna), the Path (Magga), and the Fruition (Phala)
Citta by way of object-condition (Ārammaṇa-paccaya).

"Tīṇimāni, bhikkhave, saṅkhatassa saṅkhatalakkhaṇāni. Katamāni tīṇi? Uppādo paññāyati, vayo paññāyati, ṭhitassa aññathattaṃ paññāyati."
— Saṅkhatalakkhaṇa Sutta (Aṅguttara Nikāya 3.47)

Monks, these three are the marks of the conditioned. Which three? Arising is manifest, ceasing is manifest, and alteration while standing is manifest.

"Tīṇimāni, bhikkhave, asaṅkhatassa asaṅkhatalakkhaṇāni. Katamāni tīṇi? Na uppādo paññāyati, na vayo paññāyati, na ṭhitassa aññathattaṃ paññāyati."
— Asaṅkhatalakkhaṇa Sutta (Aṅguttara Nikāya 3.48)

Monks, these three are the marks of the unconditioned. Which three? No arising is manifest, no ceasing is manifest, and no alteration while standing is manifest.

The Conditioned Screen, The Unconditioned Object

When touching the "Jet Black" element, one experiences the only reality that is Asankhata (Unconditioned). It has no arising, passing, or movement. It is the "End of the World" found within.

Even in this moment, the Magga and Phala Citta (Path and Fruition consciousness) are themselves Sankhāra (conditioned formations). They arise based on practice, endure for a moment of "Seeing," and then cease.

Sa-upādisesa Nibbana refers to seeing Nibbana while alive. One observes the Asankhata (the object) through a Saṅkhāra (the Citta). Because the Citta (the "screen") on to which the object is "projected", is conditioned, the experience has a beginning and an end.

"Khantī paramaṃ tapo titikkhā,
Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ vadanti buddhā."
— Mahāpadāna Sutta (Dīgha Nikāya 14)

Patient endurance is the highest penance; Nibbāna is supreme,
say the Buddhas.

The Perseverance

If someone from a broken background can find the exit, anyone can.
It only requires the willingness to show up.

Drop all predefined fantasies of Nibbāna.

When the fire is hot, take a step back.
When the lens is clear, cruise.
If the ego tries to "do" switch to autopilot.
Do not "hunt" for the experience. Simply "polish the lens" through humble, wise perseverance.
If you stay still enough, for long enough, the world has no choice but to break.

Title: Infinite Stamina
Author: Velocity
Place: Kandy, Sri Lanka
Date: December 29, 2025
rupajjhana@gmail.com
Distributed freely as a gift of Dhamma.